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Oversight: Senators escalate oversight

Deputy Speaker Kathuri Murungi says accountability is not an innovation of the Senate but a constitutional obligation imposed on all state officers.

Senators have sustained their push for sweeping enforcement measures against county governors who have defied accountability processes tied to billions of shillings flagged in audit reports.

In the House, lawmakers adopted a Motion compelling the two watchdog committees to push for the urgent implementation of House resolutions on Auditor-General's reports for the 2024/25 financial year. In Mombasa County, the Liaison Committee declared that all 29 governors who refused to appear before the County Public Accounts Committee (CPAC) will be required to appear and respond to issues flagged by the Office of the Auditor-General in their financial statements.

The Motion, grounded in Articles 96 and 229 of the Constitution, underscores the Senate's oversight mandate and the legal requirement for Parliament to act on audit reports within three months.

During the debate, Senators singled out 15 governors who snubbed invitations by CPAC.

The Motion, sponsored by Ledama ole Kina, notes that despite repeated invitations and summons, the 15 county governors defied the committee and refused to appear to answer for financial mismanagement.

The Motion was adopted on Thursday.

The Senate is now seeking to escalate enforcement, proposing monthly tracking of the implementation of its recommendations, alongside fresh summons for non-compliant governors and possible sanctions, including budgetary penalties and referrals to investigative agencies.



Deputy Speaker Kathuri Murungi speaks during the meeting of the Liaison Committee in Mombasa County.

The Senate has directed CPAC and the County Public Investments Committee (CPIC) to track implementation of the recommendations approved by the House and table monthly progress reports detailing compliance status. The committees are also required to fast-track the next audit cycle by prioritising Auditor-General's reports on county financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2026, and to table their reports promptly to enable thorough senatorial scrutiny.

Further, the committees are to enforce fiduciary accountability by re-summoning non-compliant governors, recommending sanctions for defiance—including budget withholding under Article 229—and escalating unresolved cases to the Controller of Budget, the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC),

or the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), as appropriate.

The two committees have also been directed to collaborate with oversight bodies—including the Controller of Budget, EACC and DPP—to impose consequences under Chapter Six (Leadership and Integrity) for governors' failure to appear. These include contempt charges, suspension of county equitable share, personal liability for losses and disqualification from future electoral candidacies.

An attempt by Richard Onyonka to amend the Motion and form a 15-member committee to undertake the task was defeated, with the House resolving that this would amount to a duplication of roles.

"We undertook our inquiry, carried out investigations and made recom-

mendations within a specific context. It would therefore be proper for the committee that conducted the inquiry and made the recommendations to follow up on implementation," said Moses Kajwang, the Chairperson of CPAC.

The House agreed with him and rejected Senator Onyonka's amendment.

In Mombasa County, during the Liaison Committee's working retreat, Deputy Speaker Kathuri Murungi said the watchdog committees will remain firm in pursuing accountability, noting that the Senate cannot continue advocating for increased allocations to counties while allowing resources to go unaccounted for.

"As the Senate, we have ensured progressive additional allocations to the counties. At the same time, we must intensify the call for accountability and ensure that no individual defies or interferes with the Senate's constitutional oversight mandate," said Senator Murungi.

The Liaison Committee brings together the chairpersons of all Senate committees and is chaired by the Deputy Speaker. The retreat was convened to review performance in the 2025 session and enhance effectiveness in the current session.

Senator Murungi said governors will be required, without exception, to appear before relevant Senate committees whenever invited to address audit queries raised by the Auditor-General.

"Accountability is not an innovation of the Senate but a constitutional obligation imposed on all State officers," he added, urging committees to remain steadfast and prioritise issues affecting ordinary citizens at the county level.

“Committees should focus on matters aligned with county and national priorities, including disruptions in fuel supply caused by external shocks, non-compliance with audit queries by governors, strengthening climate resilience and food security, safeguarding the integrity of the electoral system, and combating organised crime, banditry and criminal gangs, which pose a growing threat to national security,” he said.

Senator Murungi commended committees for their performance during the Fourth Session, noting that they had addressed pressing concerns such as access to quality healthcare, infrastructure

development, implementation of affordable housing, establishment of industrial parks to promote value addition and support farmers, and the rollout of the competency-based curriculum.

However, he highlighted challenges affecting committee performance, including inadequate budgetary allocations and a lack of cooperation by some institutions in responding to petitions, statements and questions.

He also praised the offices of the Speaker and the Clerk for supporting the smooth functioning of committee activities.



Deputy Speaker Murungi flanked by members of the Senate Liaison Committee pose for a group after they arrived in Mombasa County for their annual retreat. From left, Senator Issa Juma (Chair, Trade Committee), Senator Mohamed Faki (chair, Lands Committee) and Senator Betty Montent (chair, Education Committee).

Senate Mashinani 2026: Kilifi County picked



Senator David Wakoli

Kilifi County has been selected to host the fifth Senate Mashinani, scheduled to take place between September 21 and 25, 2026. The decision was made by the Senate Business Committee (SBC) following an inspection tour of the county by a Senate technical team in early April.

The decision was revealed by Majority Whip David Wakoli when he gave notice of the Motion in the House. Through the Motion, the lawmaker seeks the resolution of the House to approve the decision.

Debate on the Motion could begin as early as this week and, if adopted, will see County No. 3 host one of the most sought after event that has been growing in popularity in recent years.

Conceived in 2018, the Senate Mashinani initiative has largely succeeded in bringing the Senate closer to the people. In the Motion, Senator Wakoli acknowledges the successes recorded during sittings held outside

Nairobi.

The sessions have previously been held in Uasin Gishu County, Kitui County, Turkana County and Busia County in September 2018, 2019, 2023 and 2025, respectively.

The objective of Senate Mashinani is to promote the role and work of the chamber of Parliament, enhance public awareness of the business of the Senate and Parliament in general, highlight existing and new opportunities for engagement in legislative processes, and develop and strengthen partnerships at the county level of government.

The forum also provides an opportunity for members and staff of county assemblies to learn and share best practices with Senators and parliamentary officers.

Senator Wakoli said the sittings in Kilifi County are important due to the critical role the Senate plays in linking the national and county levels of government, and the need to enhance

interaction between the Senate and county governments as a means of bringing the institution closer to the counties and the general public.

Kilifi’s unique social, political and economic context adds further significance to the choice of host.

Socially, Kilifi is one of the most culturally rich counties along Kenya’s coast, home to diverse communities including the Mijikenda and Swahili, with a strong heritage anchored in traditions, coastal cuisine and tourism-driven lifestyles. At the same time, the county continues to grapple with challenges such as poverty, youth unemployment and access to education and healthcare—issues that often dominate public discourse and would benefit from direct engagement with national leaders.

Politically, Kilifi has been a key player in coastal politics, frequently reflecting broader debates around marginalisation, land ownership and resource control that have shaped the region’s relationship with the national government. The county has also been at the centre of conversations on devolution, making it a relevant venue for the Senate, whose constitutional mandate includes protecting the interests of counties and overseeing the equitable distribution of resources.

Economically, the county presents a mix of opportunity and constraint. The county boasts a thriving tourism sector, supported by Malindi and Watamu, as well as agriculture, fisheries and emerging blue economy prospects along the Indian Ocean coastline. However, seasonal tourism, infrastructure gaps and limited industrialisation continue to hinder

inclusive growth. Hosting Senate Mashinani in such a setting could therefore spotlight both the county’s economic potential and the structural challenges that require policy attention.

Senator Wakoli noted that taking Senate business to the counties strengthens oversight, deepens public participation and demystifies parliamentary processes.

“The Senate exists to represent, serve and protect the interests of counties. Holding sittings in Kilifi will bring the institution closer to the people and enhance interaction with county governments,” he said.

The proposed sittings are part of a strategy adopted by the House to decentralise its operations and improve visibility across the country.

Senator Wakoli said the initiative would not only boost awareness of the Senate’s legislative and oversight roles, but also open up avenues for citizens to engage directly with the Senate and their representatives.

“This is about promoting public awareness of the work of Parliament and creating opportunities for wana- nchi to participate meaningfully in the legislative process,” he said.

The Motion also aims to strengthen partnerships between the Senate and devolved units.

According to the mover, this will provide a platform for knowledge exchange between Senators, county assembly members and parliamentary staff.

According to the notice, such engagements will allow county officials to learn best practices in governance and legislative procedures, while giving Senators first-hand insight into the challenges facing devolved units.

Lawmakers call for more funding to IEBC for voter registration

Senators have directed the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to seek for additional resources for conducting another round of mass voter registration to give the youth and any other person not registered an opportunity to register.

The lawmakers said this will give the power to exercise their democratic rights during next year's general election. They proposed that the exercise should be conducted either in July, August or September.

"I urge all our youth, all our Gen Zs, both those in the universities and those at home, register as voters because it is an opportunity for them, so that come next year, they have an opportunity to make a decision on whom they will choose as the leader," said Senator William Kisang during debate in the House on Tuesday.

"Kenyan's like the last minute. We have the last days. I hope they will use this opportunity to go to the registration centres to register as voters. I urge them, across the country and even those in the universities and colleges, do not have to go to the polling stations. The IEBC has already configured the registration kits. You can register from anywhere and choose the polling station that you want to vote in next year. They should not fear. They do not have to travel all



Senator Enock Wambua

the way to their polling station."

The Commission launched an enhanced Continuous Voter Registration (ECVR) exercise in late March 2026, a 30-day nationwide exercise running across all counties and targets around 2.5 million or more in phases as the country prepares for the 2027 General Election.

By Thursday, April 23, a total of 1.4 Kenyans has registered as voters.

The lawmaker was contributing to a request for a Statement from Senator Enock Wambua on the capacity of the IEBC to undertake the ongoing and planned phases of enhanced continuous



Senator William Kisang

voter registration exercise, including an assessment of the adequacy of related budgetary provision, personnel and biometric voter registration kits.

Senator Wambua wants the Committee on Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights to explain the measures put in place to ensure equitable access to registration services for persons with disabilities, the elderly and people in remote and marginalised areas across the country, the ongoing voter education and mobilisation initiatives by IEBC, particularly those targeting first-time voters and the youth generally, as well as vulnerable

populations.

Supporting the Statement, Senator Crystal Asige said she had visited a couple of registration centres where IEBC is conducting the exercise and done audits: "Most of those centres are inaccessible to people with disabilities and they continue to be so," she said, adding that registration officers are not trained on disability assistance in terms of having ramps, entrances and exits that are accessible to people with disabilities.

"I have also asked them if their kits are accessible to people with disabilities and the answers continue to come back as negative."

She challenged the Committee to address issues on uncollected identity cards (IDs) by the public saying it remains an issue that will hinder full participation of Kenyans in the upcoming elections.

"If we want a new generation of leaders, we must have a new generation of voters. You will be pleased or maybe disappointed to know that in Nairobi, there are over 600,000 uncollected IDs sitting somewhere in buildings," she added, faulting IEBC, the Immigration and Registration of Persons departments for doing nothing to look for the owners and to make sure they have their IDs for them to register to vote next year.

Overhaul mental health services in schools, Senators demand

The Senate has turned the spotlight on the fragile state of mental health and psychological support systems in Kenya's learning institutions.

This follows rising cases of student distress, indiscipline and suicide linked to inadequate support structures.

The concerns were expressed during debate on the Statement sought by Senator Mwenda Gataya who is demanding a comprehensive account of the status of mental health services in schools.

He is warning that the country risks failing an entire generation if urgent interventions are not rolled out.

The lawmaker told the Senate on Tuesday that while mental health is central to learners' academic and social development, a severe shortage of trained professionals in schools has left many students exposed to psychological challenges.

"Mental health and psychological support are essential to learners' academic, personal and social development, yet the shortage of qualified mental health professionals has left many learners vulnerable," he said.



Senator Esther Okenyuri

The Senator noted that the consequences are already manifesting in unrest and tragic suicides in schools.

The Statement further paints a grim picture of teachers struggling to respond to learners' mental health needs due to lack of training and institutional support, effectively weakening the first line of intervention within schools.

Senator Gataya is now pushing the Committee on Education to explain whether the government has concrete



Senator Mwenda Gataya Mo'Fire

plans to integrate mental health education into the school curriculum as part of the efforts to reduce stigma and build awareness among learners.

He also wants clarity on budgetary allocations towards mental health programmes in schools, deployment of licensed counsellors and the establishment of clear referral systems to specialised care.

Senator Esther Okenyuri backed the call for overhaul of mental health ser-

vices, terming the issue as long neglected.

"Mental health is often overlooked. We are bringing up children who are focused on academic training but little attention is given to what goes on in their lives outside class," she said.

She emphasised that without proper psychological support, learners are unlikely to fully concentrate on their studies or grow into well-rounded individuals.

The Senate is also demanding timelines for the rollout of a comprehensive national mental health framework in learning institutions amid fears that existing interventions are fragmented and largely ineffective.

The probe will seek to determine whether schools have functional systems to identify, manage and refer cases of anxiety, stress and depression among both students and teachers.

This is a gap that has increasingly come under scrutiny following a spike in mental health-related incidents in schools.

Concerns over preps to host AFCON 2027 tourney

Kenya's preparedness to host the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations is under scrutiny after Senators raised concerns about the state of infrastructure and compliance with international standards.

Senator Crystal Asige questioned whether the country's proposed venues meet the requirements set by the Confederation of African Football (CAF), warning that any shortcomings could jeopardise the tournament.

"Recent reports have raised concerns about the status, accessibility and compliance of Kenya's proposed venues," she told the Senate on Tuesday.

The tournament will be co-hosted by Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in what has been dubbed Pamoja bid.

The latest CAF, the African football governing body, inspection report noted serious gaps: None of Kenya's stadiums currently meet required standards for AFCON hosting, facilities like Kasarani and Nyayo stadiums need major renovations, the Talanta Stadium is still under construction and that critical systems like lighting, security, media facilities,



Senator Boni Khalwale

are not fully in place yet.

Senator Asige called for transparency regarding the inspection reports and demanded clarity from the Committee on Labour and Social Welfare on deficiencies identified at key facilities such as Kasarani and Nyayo stadiums, as well as the planned Talanta Stadium.

She emphasised that accessibility must be a priority, particularly for persons with disabilities.

"Universal accessibility must be integrated into all venues," she said even as she noted that inclusivity is a critical component of modern sporting infrastructure.

Her concerns were supported by Senator Boni Khalwale who urged the Committee to also examine the preparedness of the national team as he demanded for clarity on investment in Harambee Stars and the incentives available to players.



Senator Crystal Asige

"We would like to know how much has been invested in the team and how they will be supported," he said.

The government has committed substantial resources towards hosting the tournament, including a Sh3.9 billion hosting fee.

Senators however say proper planning and accountability will be key to delivering a successful event.

Senators red flag on looming environmental disaster across the country

Kenya is facing a deepening environmental crisis that could have far-reaching consequences for the economy and public safety if urgent action is not taken, Senators have warned.

Senator Okiya Omtatah raised the alarm over what he described as a systemic failure in environmental governance and the destruction of critical ecosystems in Kenya.

Citing widespread ecosystem destruction and weak enforcement by regulatory agencies, he told the House that the country is already experiencing the effects of environmental degradation through increased flooding, prolonged droughts, and loss of biodiversity.

Kenya has in recent years faced escalating environmental crises, including flooding, prolonged droughts, biodiversity loss, and river system degradation, primarily driven by the destruction of wetlands, illegal riparian developments, unregulated sand harvesting, and encroachment into protected ecosystems.

The lawmaker argues that despite the presence of regulatory agencies such as the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya Forest Service (KFS), and Water Resources Authority (WRA), environmental degradation persists, raising concerns over weak enforcement, regulatory failure,



Senator Mohamed Faki, chair, Lands Committee

and possible corruption in approvals and licensing.

"The continued destruction of vital water towers, notably the Mau Forest Complex, poses grave risks to national water security, food production, disaster preparedness, and the safety of communities across the country," he told the House.

His concerns were echoed by Senator Ledama ole Kina, who cited the impact of pollution in Nairobi's industrial area and warned that unchecked environmental degradation could lead to job losses and expose citizens to harmful waste.

"If we do not take this issue seriously, we will not only lose jobs but also expose citizens to dangerous environmental conditions," he said.

Senator Enoch Wambua described the situation as a national crisis, warning that companies may be forced to shut

down due to worsening environmental conditions.

Senator Omtatah is demanding a comprehensive national environmental audit to identify ecosystems at risk of collapse.

He wants the Committee on Land, Environment and Natural Resources to investigate the extent of illegal developments on riparian reserves, wetlands, and floodplains across the country, including the approvals issued by relevant national and county authorities.

The probe should also examine the level of environmental degradation caused by unregulated sand harvesting in river systems, the role of county governments and national regulatory agencies in licensing and monitoring such activities, and whether major infrastructure and development projects im-

plemented within sensitive ecosystems complied with environmental laws, including requirements for environmental impact assessments.

"The Committee should investigate the extent of destruction of urban forests, wetlands, and green spaces in major cities such as Nairobi, and the measures in place to restore these ecosystems, as well as the actions taken by regulatory bodies, including NEMA, KFS, and WRA, to enforce environmental laws and halt illegal developments."

The Committee should also establish whether the Government intends to undertake a comprehensive national environmental security audit covering water towers, river ecosystems, wetlands, rangelands, and urban ecological infrastructure, in order to identify ecosystems at risk of collapse.



Senator Okiya Omtatah

Senators question Jukwaa la Usalama impact amid rising insecurity

A government initiative dubbed Jukwaa la Usalama designed to improve public safety is facing scrutiny in the Senate as lawmakers question its effectiveness despite significant public spending.

Senator Samson Cherarkey is demanding a comprehensive audit of the Jukwaa la Usalama forums even as he raised concerns about their conduct, financing and overall impact.

The initiative, launched in April 2025, was intended to foster dialogue between citizens, security agencies and the government on matters of public safety and community policing.

However, Senator Cherarkey told the House that the continued rise in insecurity across the country casts doubt on whether the programme has delivered meaningful results.

“Despite the significant taxpayer investment, insecurity persists across the country raising questions on whether value for money was achieved,” said the lawmaker.

He wants the Committee on National Security, Defence and Foreign Relations to provide a detailed breakdown of the



Senator Mohamed Chute

funds allocated and spent on the initiative.

He also wants evidence of tangible outcomes even as he called for disclosure of recommendations made during the forums and the extent to which they have been implemented.

His concerns were echoed by Senator Daniel Maanzo who said he attended one of the forums in Makueni County saying it lacked in substance.

According to the Senator, the engagement failed to address pressing local security concerns and instead took on a



Senator Samson Cherarkey

political tone. “It never really addressed the security issues. I found it to be a political meeting that did not conclude on anything,” he said.

In Marsabit, Senator Mohamed Chute painted an even bleaker picture, citing ongoing cases of killings and abductions.

He questioned the relevance of the initiative and said that its impact on the ground has been negligible. “If this forum was bringing peace, why do we still have this problem?” he posed as he pointed to recent incidents of violence.

The criticism comes against the



Senator Dan Maanzo

backdrop of rising cases of banditry, inter-community conflicts, gang activity and gender-based violence across various regions.

Lawmakers are now warning that public resources must be tied to measurable outcomes.

Senator Cherarkey also raised concerns about whether the initiative has improved trust between law enforcement agencies and communities.

He observed that strained relations remain a major challenge.

Question over quality of imported seeds, food security



Senator Ledama ole Kina and Senator William Kisang

Concerns over Kenya’s food security emerged in the House on Wednesday afternoon with the legislators demanding a comprehensive audit of seed certification, importation

and processing systems amid fears that reliance on imported seeds could undermine local agricultural production.

Importing seeds into Kenya is strictly regulated by the Seed and Plant Variet-

ies Act and overseen by the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) to ensure phytosanitary compliance. Importers must obtain a plant Import Permit (PIP) from KEPHIS before shipment, as it governs the quality, certification, and testing of seeds to prevent the introduction of pests.

Such seeds must undergo testing for purity and germination to ensure they are suitable for Kenya’s agro-ecologies.

Senator Ledama ole Kina wants the Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries to provide detailed data on seed certification and importation by the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) for the year 2025.

He warned that the trend raises serious questions about the country’s agricultural independence.

While KEPHIS is mandated to regulate and assure the quality of agricultural inputs, the Senator argues that a significant proportion of certified seeds in use within the country is imported, noting that the situation has far-reaching implications for the development of local seed systems.

“This has implications for the development of domestic seed systems and the strengthening of the local agricultur-

al value chain,” he told the House.

He wants the House furnished with a breakdown of the total quantity of certified seeds produced locally in 2025, including maize, wheat, dry beans, barley, tomatoes and onions.

The breakdown should give the details on seed companies involved and crop species.

He is also demanding data on the volume of imported seeds within the same period, including the companies responsible for importation.

Further, Senator ole Kina called for disclosure of all seed companies operating approved processing facilities in Kenya including their physical locations in a bid to establish the extent of local capacity in seed production and processing.

Senator William Kisang said Kenya has the capacity to produce sufficient seeds locally and reduce dependence on imports noting that past importation of unsuitable seed varieties had caused significant losses to farmers.

“It is sad that we got some cotton seeds from Morocco that were not for this region and basically did not flower. Farmers went into a lot of losses,” he said.

Senators demand accountability over Sh872m tobacco fund

The government has moved to tighten its grip on Kenya's tobacco industry amid rising concern over youth addiction, missing accountability in the Tobacco Control Fund and the growing use of e-cigarettes and oral nicotine products.

Appearing before the Senate on Wednesday, Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale described the tobacco sector as one of the most difficult files on his desk, warning that powerful cartels were fighting reforms.

"Since I became the Cabinet Secretary for Health, one of the hardest things I am yet to crack to the end is this tobacco business," CS Duale told senators when he responded to the question raised by Senator Daniel Maanzo.

At the centre of the question was the management of the Tobacco Control Fund, which received Sh872.55 million in the 2025/26 financial year, up from Sh831 million in the previous year and Sh756 million in 2023/24.

The fund is financed largely through solatium contributions from cigarette manufacturers and importers and is meant to support anti-tobacco campaigns, cessation programmes and en-



Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale

forcement measures.

CS Duale said the money had been channelled into public awareness campaigns, county-level advocacy, research on emerging nicotine products and the construction of rehabilitation and cessation centres in Meru and Nakuru counties.

"The Tobacco Control Fund is a very key instrument in financing Kenya's tobacco control agenda if managed with a

clear legal framework that ensures transparency, accountability and target allocation of public health," he said.

The CS disclosed that the National Treasury has just completed an audit of the fund and pledged to share the findings with Parliament.

"I think in a week's time I will table an audit report done by the National Treasury on how this fund has been used," he said.

Senator Maanzo pressed the ministry on whether the funds that are estimated at more than Sh700 million had been properly accounted for and raised concern over the failure to fully implement anti-tobacco regulations passed by the Senate last year.

Beyond the finances, Senators turned the spotlight on the alarming spread of nicotine pouches and e-cigarettes among the youth.

"One might think their daughter in the house is using lipstick but that is a drug or something laced with tobacco," CS Duale said.

He said the ministry was banking on the Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill to seal legal loopholes and curb access to nicotine products near schools.

The CS urged leaders to help change habits at the grassroots. "We should not give raw tobacco to our voters. We should provide sugar, tea and unga instead," he said.

The CS added that part of the fund would now be redirected to support cancer treatment infrastructure and rehabilitation centres for drug addicts.

Small hospitals get lifeline as State pledges equal SHA payments

Small and rural health facilities will receive equal priority in the processing and payment of medical claims under the Social Health Authority (SHA), Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale told the Senate on Wednesday, in a move aimed at easing cash flow pressures in underserved areas.

Responding to the question by Senator Tom Ojienda, the CS said the government had adopted a strict "first-in, first-out" system to ensure fairness across all categories of hospitals, regardless of size or location.

"Claims are processed strictly on a first-in, first-out principle. This ensures that claims are paid in the order they are received, giving low-tier rural facilities the same priority as national referral hospitals," CS Duale said.

The assurance comes amid growing concern that smaller facilities, particularly in rural areas, have historically struggled with delayed reimbursements, often crippling service delivery.

CS Duale, however, painted a picture of a system undergoing rapid reform, revealing that SHA is now settling claims at an average rate of 74 per cent within the legally mandated 90-day period.

"Our data confirms that this equity function is active. Level 2 primary



Senator Tom Ojienda and Senator Fatuma Dullo during a past meeting of the National Security Committee.

healthcare facilities have a 73 per cent settlement rate, Level 3 also 73 per cent, Level 4 and 5 at 72 per cent, while Level 6 referral hospitals stand at 74 per cent," said CS Duale.

To further stabilise operations, the government has introduced predictable monthly disbursements, with payments released on the 14th of every month.

This is a shift expected to improve planning for smaller hospitals that rely heavily on reimbursements to stay afloat.

"While the law requires payment within 90 days, we are more proactive, disbursing payments every 14th day of the month," CS Duale told senators.

The authority disbursed Sh13.5 billion to health facilities across the country in the last one week, a figure the CS

contrasted sharply with the former National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF), which collected between Sh3.5 billion and Sh3.7 billion over several months.

The reforms have also extended to primary healthcare, where the government says it has cleared payments up to January 2026, with the remaining months pending release of funds from the Exchequer.

In a significant boost to grassroots health services, CS Duale revealed that an additional Sh6 billion had been secured, including Sh2 billion earmarked for maternity services and Sh4 billion for other primary healthcare needs.

The changes are already being felt on the ground, with millions of Kenyans accessing services at dispensaries and

health centres without out-of-pocket costs.

"Close to 8.7 million Kenyans have accessed free healthcare in our Level 2 and 3 facilities, and a total of Sh19.8 billion has been paid in the last 18 months," the CS said.

Under the new system, patients can walk into a facility, receive consultation, diagnostics and medication and leave without paying, as the government shoulders the cost through SHA.

"We walk to a facility, there is a chatter, it is walk in, walk out. You see a doctor, you go to the laboratory, to diagnostics, to the pharmacy and you go home," he said.

Despite the optimism, the CS acknowledged that some payments remain tied to the release of funds and ongoing verification processes, a reality that continues to test patience among health providers.

Still, the government insists the reforms mark a turning point in the push towards universal health coverage, particularly for rural communities long left at the margins.

"The transformation undergoing in our country in the health sector is real. It is working and Kenyans are appreciating across the country," CS Duale said

Family's agony deepens over mysterious death of Makueni man



CS Kipchumba Murkomen

For the family of Emmanuel Mumo Ndivo, the past eight months have been defined by anguish, unanswered questions and a haunting discovery at a Nairobi mortuary.

The 33-year-old from Lukenya Village in Kibwezi East was last seen alive on the evening of August 24, 2025. Days later, his lifeless body would be found at the Nairobi Funeral Home without his family's knowledge.

On Wednesday, the circumstances surrounding his death took centre stage in the Senate as Senator Daniel Maanzo

pressed the government for answers, reflecting the pain and confusion still gripping the deceased's relatives.

"Could the Cabinet Secretary explain the circumstances surrounding the abduction and subsequent death of Mr Emmanuel Mumo Ndivo?" the senator asked.

Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen offered a starkly different account, dismissing claims of abduction and instead pointing to a fatal road accident.

"The government is not aware of his abduction. On the contrary, the government is aware that on August 27, 2025, Mr Jackson Kioko Ndivo reported the disappearance of his brother at Kangemi Police Station," he said.

According to police records presented in the House, the report indicated that Ndivo had gone missing on August 24 at around 6pm. Investigations were launched by the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) in Dagoretti, including analysis of his mobile phone data.

However, before the probe could advance, a chilling twist emerged.

CS Murkomen told Senators that the family later discovered Mr Ndivo's body had already been lying at the Nairobi Fu-

neral Home, registered as an unidentified victim of a hit-and-run accident along Waiyaki Way.

"Preliminary investigations revealed that a report of a hit-and-run fatal road accident was filed at Kabete Police Station. It was reported that an unknown male body was lying in the middle of the road," he said.

Police officers visited the scene, documented evidence and transferred the body to the mortuary pending identification.

At the time, authorities had no way of linking the deceased to his family.

It was only later, after the missing person report, that relatives traced the body and confirmed his identity.

A post-mortem conducted on September 9, 2025, in the presence of family members concluded that Mr Ndivo died from "blunt head, chest and abdominal organ injuries consistent with a road traffic accident," according to the Cabinet Secretary.

For the family, the sequence of events — disappearance, delayed discovery and lack of immediate communication — has fuelled suspicion and emotional distress.

CS Murkomen acknowledged that the delay stemmed from the fact that the body was initially unidentified.

"The family was not immediately informed since the incident involved an unidentified body necessitating the identification process which was eventually conducted by the family," he said.

He also dismissed suggestions of police involvement in any unlawful detention or handling of the deceased prior to his death.

"According to police records, there is no report indicating the abduction or detention of the late Emmanuel," he said, adding that the only documented police interaction was in response to the reported accident.

The CS cautioned against what he termed the misuse of the term "abduction," saying it had become common for missing persons cases to be prematurely framed as enforced disappearances.

"It is becoming the norm to claim the police 'abducted' someone even when they are missing," he told Senators.

CS Murkomen said the government had put in place measures including specialised response teams within the DCI, enhanced community policing and confidential reporting channels for the public.

"The Government remains firmly committed to upholding the Constitution and safeguarding the fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens," he said.

Family waits, promises linger as Sh735 million EduAfya claims stall

For more than two years, the memory of 17-year-old Shekinah Pendo Vudavila has lived on in her father's quiet wait for closure.

The Naivasha Girls Secondary School student died on October 17, 2023 and like many Kenyan parents, her father, Mr Norbert Bulungu, turned to the government-backed EduAfya Medical Scheme for last expense compensation.

He filed his claim, submitted the paperwork and waited through months of silence, shifting systems and unanswered questions.

This week in the Senate, that wait finally found a voice when Senator Edwin Sifuna rose to ask why Mr Bulungu's claim — and hundreds of others — had not been paid despite being duly lodged.

His question cut to the heart of a growing concern: what has become of the promises made under EduAfya, a scheme once designed to cushion families of school-going children?

In response, Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale acknowledged the delay and pointed to a turbulent transition in Kenya's health financing system.

The shift from the now-defunct National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) to the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF), alongside the establishment of the Social Health Authority (SHA), disrupted the processing of claims.

"The delay in compensation was occasioned by operational transition and the subsequent lapsing of the EduAfya Medical Scheme on 31st December, 2023," CS Duale told the House.

For families like Mr Bulungu's, how-



Senator Edwin Sifuna and Senator Moses Kajwang during a sitting of the County Public Accounts Committee.

ever, the explanation offers little comfort. Behind the bureaucratic language lies a deeply personal reality — funeral costs borne, debts accumulated and a sense of abandonment by a system meant to help.

The Cabinet Secretary revealed that pending group life and last expense claims under EduAfya stand at Sh116 million, part of a much larger backlog of Sh735.8 million owed to claimants.

That total includes Sh320.5 million in inpatient claims and Sh299.2 million in outpatient claims, painting a picture of widespread delays affecting hospitals, patients and bereaved families alike.

Yet, amid the grim figures, CS Duale offered a firm commitment.

"This claim will be settled within the next two weeks. To be more specific by May 8, this claim will have been settled

and the House can hold me to account," he said, referring to Bulungu's case and others in the same category.

The promise drew cautious optimism from Senator Sifuna, who welcomed the specificity of the timeline but pressed for more clarity on the remaining claims.

"Those are the sort of responses we expect in this House," he said and added: "I will wait until May 8 and expect that communication from him."

However, the Senator expressed concern over what he termed as vague assurances regarding the bulk of pending claims.

"My concern is with regards to the question asking the Cabinet Secretary to state when the rest of the pending claims under the defunct EduAfya Medical Scheme will be settled, once and for all?"

I wish the CS was as specific. A timetable will be acceptable at this particular point in time," Senator Sifuna said.

The Cabinet Secretary explained that while Sh116 million will be cleared immediately, the remaining Sh619.8 million will be settled gradually, alongside other NHIF legacy debts, depending on availability of funds.

To address the wider crisis, the National Treasury has allocated Sh4 billion in a supplementary budget to begin clearing verified NHIF debts, particularly smaller claims ranging between Sh1 million and Sh10 million, which account for the majority of outstanding payments.

"We will start paying that from next week," Mr Duale said, adding that all verified legacy claims are expected to be settled by July or August this year.

Still, the human cost of the delays loomed large over the proceedings.

For families who lost loved ones, compensation is not merely a financial transaction but recognition, dignity and closure.

For hospitals, unpaid claims strain operations and threaten service delivery.

And for ordinary Kenyans, the backlog raises questions about trust in public health schemes.

The transition to SHA, the government insists, marks a new era of efficiency and accountability. CS Duale noted that millions of Kenyans have already registered under the new system and that billions of shillings are being disbursed to health facilities.

But the shadow of EduAfya's unpaid claims lingers.

Senate ringfences Sh8.94 billion fund to end clinical officers' dispute

Senators have adopted a report in which they have ordered urgent reforms in the health sector with a recommendation to ring-fence Sh8.94 billion in the 2026/27 financial year to cater for salaries and gratuity for clinicians.

The House also directed strict safeguards to prevent diversion of the funds and placed a requirement that pending arrears be cleared within the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year.

The lawmakers further raised the alarm over delays in internship postings, revealing that more than 5,400 qualified clinical officers are yet to be deployed, effectively locking them out of practice and worsening staffing shortages in health facilities.

“An internship is not optional. It is a legal and professional prerequisite. Delays inevitably weaken staffing across health facilities,” Senator Marian Omar, the Health Committee Vice-Chairperson told the House when moving debate on the Motion.

The resolution is now placing the Ministry of Health, county governments and the Social Health Authority (SHA) under pressure to resolve long-standing grievances raised by clinical officers.

The report, arising from a petition by the Kenya Union of Clinical Officers (KUCO), paints a troubling picture of systemic discrimination, delayed implementation of labour agreements and bureaucratic inefficiencies that have undermined both healthcare delivery and workforce morale.

Senator Omar told the House the petition exposes deep-rooted governance failures affecting one of the most critical cadres in the country's health system.

“The grievances presented by KUCO did not arise overnight. They reflect prolonged patterns of industrial disputes, delayed implementation of agreements and uncertainty over terms of service,” she said.

At the centre of the dispute are claims of exclusion of clinical officers in the implementation of the SHA framework, delays in internship postings, failure to implement return-to-work agreements and stalled absorption of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) staff into permanent and pensionable terms.

The committee found that the failures are not merely administrative but have direct consequences on service delivery noting that clinical officers are often the first, and in many rural areas the only, point of contact for patients.



Senator Samson Cherarkey speaks as Senator Godfrey Osotsi looks on during a Senate Committee's event.

“They provide essential treatments, minor surgical procedures and long-term disease management,” Senator Omar said.

The report gives prominence to a series of time-bound recommendations aimed at restoring order in the sector.

Top among them is a directive requiring the Cabinet Secretary for Health, the Council of Governors and County Public Service Boards to develop, within 30 days, a consolidated implementation matrix for the Return-to-Work Agreements and Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

The matrix must outline specific actions, responsible officers and timelines and be followed by quarterly progress reports to the Senate.

“This gives the Senate a practical oversight tool rather than a mere declaratory resolution,” Senator Omar noted.

In a move aimed at addressing structural inconsistencies, the House further directed the Ministry of Health and the Council of Governors, in consultation with KUCO, to develop within 60 days a standardised human resource deployment framework covering internship placements, staff absorption and transfers across counties.

The Senate also called for the fast-tracking of the absorption of UHC and Global Fund staff into permanent and pensionable terms, citing prolonged delays caused by bureaucratic bottlenecks and disputes between national and county governments.

Senator Samson Cherarkey linked the crisis to failures in the management of



Senator Mariam Omar

devolved health services warning that the success of devolution itself hinges on the performance of the health sector.

“If you want to know whether devolution is working or not, just look at the health function because it affects the local person in the village,” he said, describing clinical officers as the backbone of county health systems, particularly in rural areas where doctors are scarce.

“In most of our facilities, clinical officers are the only saviours. They are the ones we call ‘daktari’ because they are always there for patients,” he said.

Senator Cherarkey noted that the country has over 30,000 clinical officers, many of them specialists in fields such

as anaesthesia, paediatrics, oncology and orthopaedics. Continued marginalisation of the cadre, warned Senator Cherarkey, would have far-reaching consequences.

He also criticised the failure to empanel clinical officers under the SHA framework, terming it discriminatory and unjustified.

“The failure of empanelment by SHA, the Ministry of Health and county governments is very unfortunate,” he said.

Senator Omar cautioned: “Where co-ordination fails, the effects are immediate and severe: industrial unrest deepens, facilities become understaffed and patients bear the burden through delayed or disrupted care.”

Senate backs gender mainstreaming push



Senator Joyce Korir

The Senate has adopted the Motion whose aim is to mainstream gender perspectives in legislative and policy processes.

Through the motion that was passed on Tuesday, the lawmakers mounted a case for urgent reforms to address entrenched inequalities in governance, representation and public decision-making.

The motion, sponsored by Senator Veronica Maina, drew wide support across the aisle, with Senators warning that Kenya risks undermining its constitutional commitments if gender parity remains largely aspirational.

Senator Samson Cherarkey pointed to a constitutional contradiction at the heart of Parliament itself, arguing that failure to meet the two-thirds gender rule continues to expose the Legislature to legal and moral scrutiny.

“Parliament was declared not constitutionally constituted because it violated Article 27(8) on the two-thirds gender rule. That brings serious legal implications that affect the role of women,” he said, adding that gender mainstreaming must move beyond policy language and be anchored in active participation by women in electoral politics.

“The only way women can stop tokenism is by registering, voting and running for office. That is how they will be part and parcel of decision-making,” he said.

The debate on the Motion exposed stark disparities in representation with Senators noting that despite women constituting more than half of Kenya’s population, their presence in elective leader-

ship remains disproportionately low.

The scale of imbalance is typified by the fact that only 23 per cent of members elected to the National Assembly in 2022 were women.

Senator Joyce Korir reinforced the urgency of the Motion, describing gender inequality as a systemic governance issue that cuts across all institutions. “The Houses, from the National Assembly to the Senate and county assemblies, are not constitutionally constituted. Gender is not just about women. It affects all of us,” she said, and called for a shift from debate to decisive implementation.

She urged the country to draw lessons from jurisdictions that have made deliberate strides in gender parity even as she noted that meaningful inclusion requires both political will and institutional reform.

“Gone are the days when women were taken for granted as homemakers. Women are performing in leadership and they must be given the chance,” she said.

She said continued inaction coupled with repetitive debate without tangible outcomes risks eroding public confidence. “We must not discuss this year in, year out. We must deal with it and ensure it is implemented to the letter.”

Senator Boni Khalwale approached the issue from a societal and philosophical lens, arguing that gender mainstreaming must be embedded across all levels of policy formulation and implementation.

“It is through gender mainstreaming that you can provide equal benefits and prevent inequality. The strategy is to de-



Senator Munyi Mundigi



Senator Veronica Maina

liberately integrate gender equality in all policies and programmes,” he said, even as he challenged narratives that portray gender equality as a modern imposition, instead arguing that inclusive governance aligns with both constitutional principles and social justice.

Senator Mwenda Gataya linked gender mainstreaming to institutional effectiveness and social stability and emphasised that equitable participation strengthens decision-making processes and enhances the legitimacy of public institutions.

Senator Munyi Mundigi supported the Motion by highlighting both historical and contemporary contributions of women in leadership noting that gender balance is not a new concept but one that has evolved alongside governance systems.

He pointed to the increasing visibility

of women in senior leadership positions as evidence of progress but cautioned that such gains remain uneven and require deliberate policy support to be sustained.

Senator Cherarkey raised concerns over exploitation within political processes, particularly during party nominations, warning that women candidates remain vulnerable to manipulation and intimidation.

“We must protect women from political violence, intimidation and exploitation. Let us give them space to run and serve,” he said.

The Motion is aimed at integrating gender considerations into all aspects of governance, including lawmaking, budgeting and public policy design.

This is the approach senators said is critical to achieving inclusive development.

Move to streamline construction sector as Senate starts debate on Bill



Senator Eddy Oketch

The Senate has taken the first step towards reforming Kenya's construction industry with a proposed law that is seeking to tighten regulation, enhance professionalism and curb malpractice in the sector.

Debate on the Bill started on Wednesday afternoon. It outlines sweeping changes aimed at strengthening the mandate of the National Construction Authority (NCA) and restoring order in an industry that has increasingly come under scrutiny over safety concerns and substandard works.

The Bill seeks to amend the National Construction Authority Act to strengthen regulation, improve standards, and

enhance accountability in Kenya's construction industry. It is part of broader efforts to address rising cases of building collapses, poor workmanship and unsafe structures and weak enforcement of construction standards.

It also seeks to embed green building standards, climate resilience, and mandatory solar installation in designated zones. It strengthens NCA's role in oversight to enhance sustainability and address building collapses, aligning the sector with global climate commitments.

Moving the debate on the Bill Senator Eddy Oketch, the chair of the Committee on Roads, Transport and Housing warned that the construction sector

remains vulnerable to exploitation by unqualified contractors and weak enforcement frameworks noting that this has exposed Kenyans to risks including building collapses and financial losses.

"This Bill seeks to strengthen the regulatory framework and ensure that only qualified and compliant contractors are allowed to operate," he told the House.

At the core of the proposed law is a push to enhance oversight by the NCA. This includes stricter registration requirements, clearer enforcement mechanisms and tougher penalties for violators. It broadens the NCA's functions to explicitly require the use of environmentally sustainable materials, construction

methods and building designs and introduces a mandatory requirement for installing solar energy systems in new buildings in designated zones with operational regulations developed by the Cabinet Secretary.

The Bill will enable the NCA to ensure building codes include mechanisms for climate change responsiveness, such as energy efficiency, water conservation (rainwater harvesting/greywater recycling) and flood/heat resistance.

The Bill also seeks to promote professionalism and accountability across the construction value chain.

Senator Oketch pointed at the need to protect public interest, noting that the current gaps in regulation have allowed rogue contractors to thrive at the expense of quality and safety.

"The construction industry plays a critical role in our economy but without proper regulation, it becomes a danger to the very people it is meant to serve," he said.

The proposed amendments are expected to strengthen the regulatory mandate of the National Construction Authority, enhance compliance with building standards and safety regulations, improve registration and oversight of contractors and construction professionals and promote quality assurance in construction projects.

This Week in History - On April April 30, 2019

Senators reject Sh9 billion reduction in county equitable share



Senator Mohamed Mahamud said:

"The mandate of raising national revenue – because we are sharing the national revenue raised nationally – falls squarely on the national Government. It has nothing to do with the people in the counties. There is no reason why the national Treasury should punish them for shortfalls or non-collections of revenue. After all, we have questioned the national Treasury, where every year they project a lot of revenue yet they end up collecting little. The other issue which stakeholders have raised is the latest audited accounts as approved by the National Assembly, whereas the Office of the Auditor-General, we were told, has submitted reports of 2017/2018. We are still stuck in 2014/2015; a failure on the part of our sister House to do the job they are supposed to do. In the light of that, the Committee and, of course, this Senate, is called upon to consider the Bill from the National Assembly, taking into account that there is no way this Senate will allow the allocation to the counties to go below the allocations of this Financial Year. The counties are getting Sh314 billion this year, but the purported reduction of Sh9 billion is not acceptable. Therefore, Sh314 billion will be the base for us and grow that with the three-year average inflation of 6.9 percent and the figure comes to Sh335.67 billion to the counties.



Senator Farhiya Ali said:

"There was a proposal to reduce some money from counties in the last financial year. The fact is that the national Treasury has not revised the revenue collection estimates. Why are we reducing money to counties yet even if you were to buy their argument that they are underperforming in terms of collection, even their estimates still showed that it is Sh1.6 trillion in terms of revenue generation for this country. We need to address issues around national interest as well as debt. The revenue that we generate is the first charge that we have. We should have a conversation around what makes a public debt and every given year, determine how much debt we should acquire. Short of that, we will have a moving goal post. The counties do not generate revenue and the two charges go to the decision made by the national Government, yet the consequence is felt by the county governments. One of the reasons given by the national Government as to why money to counties was deducted is because whatever was available is less after those two deductions."



Senator Ledama ole Kina said:

"This House is not a rubber stamp. We cannot be rubber-stamping legislation. I have a lot of respect for the Cabinet Secretary for the National Treasury, but with this one, I begin to lose respect for him. He cannot sit there and decided to reduce the money that goes to counties to Sh310 billion yet this House, in its wisdom, thought otherwise. The amount of work that the Committee on Finance has undertaken and all these other agencies which are tasked with looking at how the economy is growing has recommended that we increase more money, to at least, Sh335 billion. We start to negotiate from Sh314 billion and nothing less than that. When we agree to pass this Bill as it is, all of us will be negating our duty and it will be a sad day in the history of this country. Early last year, I thought that we were moving back into a unitary State because everything focused on the national Government."



Senator George Khaniri said:

"One of the cardinal responsibilities of this House is to pass this Bill and the County Allocation of Revenue Bill. Therefore, we support the Senate Majority Leader for recalling us from our recess to ensure that we push this particular agenda. Article 202 of the Constitution provides for equitable share of revenue between the national Government and county governments. Looking at this particular formula that is being used, we cannot call this equitable. We will oppose this vehemently to ensure that the reduction of Sh9 billion does not go through. If we allow this to go through the way it is, for sure, we are setting the counties to fail. We may accuse counties of corruption and other reasons. However, the reason they are not doing well is because they are underfunded. They just get enough to pay salaries and other recurrent expenditures. They are left with very little to do the actual development that was the main reason for creating counties and devolution."

27 students complete Parliament Voluntary Service Scheme



Deputy Clerk Eunice Gichangi with Parliamentary staff and students who participated in the Voluntary Service Scheme (VSS).



A section of the students who participated in the VSS follow discussions during their final meeting at the Senate.

For 27 bright students from some of Kenya's most prestigious schools, April 2026 was no ordinary month.

From the gates of Starehe Boys' Centre, Alliance High School, Kianda School, Loreto Convent Valley Road and Kiota School they walked into the corridors of Parliament ready to learn, question and dream under the Voluntary Service Scheme (VSS) run by the Senate Liaison Office.

Their journey began on April 7 with an orientation led by Ms Eunice Nabkoi, Mr Collins Injera and Gikunda Murithi. The students were taken through the dos and don'ts of parliamentary life, handed copies of the Senate Standing Orders and the Constitution and taken on a tour of Parliament Buildings.

Amid the day-long orientation exercise, the Deputy Clerk of the Senate Eunice Gichangi, formally commissioned them, marking the start of their two-week immersion.

Split between the Senate and the National Assembly, the students shadowed staff across directorates; from Legisla-

tive and Procedural Services, ICT and Library Services, Hansard and Audio Services; to Legal Services. They even received recognition in both Houses, a moment many described as surreal.

"It was an honor and privilege to be here, we now understand how Parliament works, and some of us will definitely be back, whether as staffers or even honourable members," one of the students shared.

The programme wasn't just about observing; it was about contributing. During feedback sessions, students shared their experience and presented ideas to improve parliamentary processes.

One standout proposal came from an Alliance High School student, who envisioned an AI-powered solution to make the chamber inclusive for members with hearing impairments.

The secretariat, led by Ms Linda Chavera, applauded the idea.

"We acknowledge the gaps in accessibility, such as the Parliament website not being fully inclusive for persons with

disabilities. Ideas like these are welcome to make Parliament as accommodative as possible," Ms. Chavera remarked.

The programme concluded with a luncheon where the students engaged with Mr Antony Buluma, the CEO for the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) -- a caucus bringing together young parliamentarians from the Senate and the National Assembly.

Mr. Buluma spoke passionately about the importance of youth participation in politics, reminding them of Trevor Kibet, the 13-year-old who wrote to then-Finance Minister Amos Kimunya in 2007, with bold ideas on improving Kenya's development and governance.

"Politics is not just about leaders, it is about citizens, especially young people, taking part in shaping the future of our country," Mr Buluma told the students, encouraging them to put to practice what they learnt during their time in Parliament.

As the students left Parliament on April 17, they carried with them more than just memories. They carried inspi-

ration, knowledge, and a sense of responsibility.

Some would introduce themselves as "Honourable Members" during the programme, proudly identifying with their constituencies and vowing to be back as elected members of parliament.

The Voluntary Service Scheme (VSS), established in 2009 and initially managed under the National Assembly before Kenya adopted a bicameral parliament, was transferred to the Senate Liaison Office in 2021. During school holidays, Parliament, upon request from respective institutions, hosts up to three students per school, offering them a unique opportunity to experience the workings of the legislature.

Over the years, the programme has achieved more than simply opening doors for secondary school students; it has opened minds. In those minds, the seeds of Kenya's future leadership have been planted, nurturing a generation better equipped to engage with governance and public service.

Story and pictures by Solomon Komen

Seneta Hamida amulika hitilafu za usajili wa wapiga kura



Seneta Hamida Kibwana

Seneta Hamida Kibwana kupitia ombi la Kauli kwenye Kamati ya Haki, Masuala ya Kisheria na Haki za Kibanadamu, ametaka maelezo kuhusu hali ya hitilafu zilizobainika Aprili 4, 2026 kwenye tovuti ya uthibitishaji wa wapiga kura, ambapo baadhi ya wananchi walishindwa kupata taarifa zao huku wengine wakikumbana na dosari mbalimbali katika taarifa za usajili.

Aliitaka Kamati hiyo kubainisha iwapo Tume Huru ya Uchaguzi na Mi-

paka (IEBC) imefanya ukaguzi wa kina kubaini chanzo cha hitilafu hizo, idadi ya wapiga kura walioathiriwa na hatua zilizochukuliwa kurekebisha kasoro hizo kwa haraka.

Seneta Kibwana pia aliitaka Kamati hiyo kueleza iwapo wananchi walioathiriwa watapatiwa muda wa ziada kuthibitisha taarifa zao baada ya mfumo huo kurekebishwa ili kuhakikisha hakuna anayenyimwa haki ya kupiga kura

kutokana na matatizo ya kiufundi.

“Ni muhimu wananchi wawe na imani kuwa sajili ya wapiga kura ni sahihi, salama na inayoweza kuaminika wakati wote,” alisema Seneta Kibwana.

Wakati uo huo, Seneta huyo kupitia ombi la pili aliibua wasiwasi kuhusu kiwango cha elimu kwa raia inayotolewa sambamba na zoezi la usajili wa wapiga kura, akisema kuwasajili wananchi pekee hakutoshi bila kuwapa maarifa ya haki zao na wajibu wao wa kidemokrasia.

Aliitaka Kamati hiyo kueleza hatua zinazochukuliwa na taasisi husika kuhakikisha elimu ya uraia inaingizwa kikamilifu katika zoezi la usajili wa wapiga kura, hasa kwa vijana na wananchi wanaojisajili kwa mara ya kwanza.

Pia alitaka kupatiwa maelezo kuhusu iwapo kuna rasilimali za kutosha, maafisa wa kutosha na mikakati madhubuti ya kufikisha elimu hiyo shuleni, katika jamii na maeneo ya umma ili kuongeza uelewa wa wananchi kuhusu uchaguzi.

Kadhalika, Seneta Kibwana alisisitiza haja ya kuhakikisha wananchi wanaoashiriki uchaguzi wakiwa na taarifa sahihi, uelewa wa kutosha na uwezo wa kufanya maamuzi huru yanayojenga taifa.

“Hatua za haraka zinahitajika ili kurejesha imani ya wananchi katika mfumo wa uchaguzi na kuimarisha ushiriki wa umma kupitia elimu ya uraia,” aliongeza.

Aidha, Seneta huyo aliitaka Kamati hiyo kufafanua mipango ya muda mrefu ya kuimarisha mifumo ya kidijitali ya uchaguzi na mipango endelevu ya elimu ya uraia ili kuzuia changamoto kama hizo siku zijazo.

Seneta Kibwana alisisitiza umuhimu wa kuweka mikakati madhubuti ya kulinda demokrasia kwa kuhakikisha sajili ya wapiga kura ni ya kuaminika na wananchi wanapata elimu stahiki kuhusu haki na wajibu wao wa kikatiba.

Seneta Gataya ataka majibu kuhusu afya ya akili shuleni

Seneta Mwenda Gataya ameomba maelezo ya kina kuhusu hali ya huduma za afya ya akili katika taasisi za elimu nchini na changamoto zinazokikumba Chuo cha Ufundi na Mafunzo ya Kiufundi cha Tharaka, akitaka hatua za haraka kuchukuliwa kuboresha ustawi wa wanafunzi na ubora wa elimu.

Akiwasilisha ombi la Kauli kwenye Kamati ya Elimu, Seneta Gataya alisema kuwa masuala ya afya ya akili yamekuwa changamoto kubwa katika shule nyingi nchini kutokana na ukosefu wa wataalamu wa kutosha na rasilimali duni za kuwasaidia wanafunzi na walimu.

Katika ombi lake, Seneta huyo aliitaka Kamati hiyo kueleza iwapo kuna mipango ya kujumuisha elimu ya afya ya akili katika mitaala ya shule ili kuongeza uelewa na kupunguza unyanyapaa. Aidha, alitaka kufahamu kiwango cha fedha zilizotengwa kusaidia huduma hizo na hatua zinazochukuliwa kuwaajiri wataalamu wa afya ya akili katika taasisi za elimu.

Seneta Gataya pia aliitaka Kamati kubainisha mifumo iliyowekwa kuhakikisha huduma za afya ya akili zinatekelezwa ipasavyo, ikiwemo kuwepo kwa mifumo ya rufaa kwa huduma maalum kwa wanafunzi wanaohitaji msaada zaidi.

“Ni muhimu kuhakikisha kuwa wanafunzi wanapata mazingira salama ya kujifunza na msaada wa kisaikolojia un-



Seneta Mwenda Gataya

aohitajika ili kukuza maendeleo yao ya jumla,” alisema Seneta Gataya.

Wakati uo huo, Seneta huyo kupitia ombi la pili, aliibua wasiwasi kuhusu hali ya uendeshaji wa Chuo cha Tharaka, akisema taasisi hiyo inakabiliwa na changamoto kadhaa zikiwemo kucheleweshwa kwa fedha za ruzuku, upungufu wa wakufunzi na ukosefu wa vifaa vya kisasa vya mafunzo.

Aliitaka Kamati hiyo kueleza hatua zinazochukuliwa na serikali ya kitaifa

kuhakikisha fedha za ruzuku na msaada mwingine zinatolewa kwa wakati ili kuelewa kudorora kwa shughuli za chuo hicho. Pia alitaka kupatiwa mchanganuo wa mapato na matumizi ya chuo hicho kwa mwaka wa kifedha wa 2025/26.

Vilevile, Seneta Gataya alisisitiza haja ya kuboresha warsha na vifaa vya mafunzo ili kuwawezesha wanafunzi kupata ujuzi wa vitendo unaohitajika katika soko la ajira.

“Hatua za dharura zinahitajika ili ku-

hakikisha kuwa vyuo vya kiufundi vinatea mafunzo bora na vinachangia kikamilifu katika maendeleo ya vijana na uchumi wa nchi,” aliongeza.

Kadhalika, aliitaka Kamati hiyo kufafanua mipango ya kuwaajiri wakufunzi zaidi na kuhakikisha utoaji wa fedha za masomo kupitia Bodi ya Mikopo ya Elimu ya Juu (HELB) unafanyika kwa wakati ili kuzuia wanafunzi kuacha masomo kutokana na changamoto za kifedha.



1. Speaker Amason Kingi speaks to Interior CS Kipchumba Murkomen who was in Parliament to respond to Senators' questions last week. Senator Tom Ojienda looks on.
2. Minority Leader Stewart Madzayo and CS Murkomen.
3. Senator Karen Nyamu with members of the Nyakinyua women group during their tour of Parliament.
4. Senator Veronica Maina speaks to Members of the Portfolio Committee on Social Development from the Legislature of Limpopo Province of South Africa during their tour of Kenyan Parliament last week.
5. Senator Ledama ole Kina, Senator Edwin Sifuna and Senator Hamida Kibwana pose for a group photo with students from Kenyatta University who were at the Senate for an academic tour.
6. Speaker Amason Kingi signs the Condolences Book when he commiserates with the family of Cabinet Secretary Davis Chirchir who lost their family patriarch.
7. Speaker Kingi when he hosted a section of political leaders from the coast region at his office in Nairobi.
8. Members of the Portfolio Committee on Social Development from the Legislature of Limpopo Province of South Africa follow proceedings in the Senate during their tour of Kenyan Parliament.



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